

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 81

WASHINGTON POST
18 March 1986

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Pinching Rubles at the U.N.

The American order directing the Soviets to reduce their U.N. mission from 250 to 170 citizens has caused a furor in Moscow. The Kremlin has accused the United States of directly damaging Soviet-U.S. relations.

What the Russians don't know is that the State Department could not go back on its directive even if it wanted to.

This is why.

It is no secret that Soviet U.N. diplomats spend a minimal amount of time on United Nations business and the majority of their time spying for the KGB. It is also no secret that the FBI keeps tabs on the Soviet diplomats 24 hours a day.

Everyone was happy with the arrangement until the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill was passed dictating severe cuts in the government budget. Even the FBI was hit hard and told to cut down on its services.

Bill Webster, the chief of the Bureau, went over to the Office of Management and Budget and protested he would not be responsible for the security of the nation if he lost his funds. He cited FBI surveillance of Soviet U.N. personnel as a typical example of the type of work that could not be performed if the cuts went into effect.

The OMB chief suggested that to balance the budget the FBI follow the Russians only 60 percent of the time. But Webster said it wouldn't work. Once they

were aware of the cutbacks the KGB would use 40 percent of the time they weren't followed to do their dirty work, and 60 percent to lead the FBI on a wild goose chase.

The OMB then suggested that since they were *Soviet* U.N. spies, the surveillance money might come out of the State Department budget. George Shultz had apoplexy when Webster called, and said he didn't have enough money to make a call to the Soviet mission much less tap a Russian telephone line. Shultz told Webster that because of Gramm-Rudman the State Department is so broke it is seriously considering closing the U. S. Embassy in London and having whatever U.S. business we do with Great Britain conducted by our American ambassador in Portugal.

Rejected by State, the CIA was a natural place for Webster to go next and ask for funds to cover the Soviet U.N. scoundrels. But Bill Casey wasn't buying. He told Webster, "Any money we can get our hands on goes to lobby Congress for covert funds for Nicaragua."

Webster went back to his office and wrestled with his problem. The thought occurred to him that as an economy he might assign one FBI agent to follow *two* Russians. But it was pointed out to him that the plan could fall apart if one KGB man took a bus to the Bronx and the other boarded the ferry for Staten Island.

The FBI director was doodling in disgust

when the big idea came to him. What would happen if the United States tossed out 100 U.N. Soviet spooks? Then his agents would only have to follow half as many spies.

Webster called up Shultz and asked him if it was legal. The secretary said Webster could throw out as many Russians as he needed to meet his Gramm-Rudman budget quota. When asked what the reaction of the Soviets might be, Shultz said in his opinion there would be no objection as long as Webster laid off the same number of FBI agents as Russian employees kicked out of the U.S.

Thus legally cleared, the announcement was made last week and the Soviet U.N. personnel were told bluntly to go home.

Well, the Soviets screamed bloody murder—but here is the part nobody knows about. There was joy in KGB headquarters in Moscow when the U.N. mission cut was announced.

It appears that the Soviet Union has the equivalent of a Gramm-Rudman bill of its own, and the KGB had been ordered, for budget reasons, to cut back on its spies in the U.S. They were just about to do it when the U.S. moved first and ordered the 100 Russian agents to leave New York. So now the KGB has the best of both worlds. It can blame the U.S. for the forced removal of its spies and meet its Grammovich-Rudinsky budget cuts at the same time.

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